

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Alfred D. Lott, ICMA-CM, CPM
City Manager

SUBJECT: ***Status Report*** DATE: March 10, 2022

Status Report

1. Spring Events

In lieu of the normal April/Earth Month calendar of events which usually includes the Bowie Green Expo and the Concert (both cancelled this year), Green Bowie will be hosting a number of smaller events spread out through March, April, and May. Subscribe to the Green Bowie e-newsletter to stay updated on events or contact the Sustainability Planner or Watershed Manager if interested in any of the below events.

- March 19, April 2, April 23, 9-noon: Weed Warrior Workdays with the Green Team at Whitemarsh Park. ***Student Service Learning hours available*** (attachment 1).
- March 22, 10 am: Coffee & Climate #2, focusing on trees and stormwater management. Register: <https://bowie.fyi/coffclim2>. (attachment 2).
- March 23, 4-6pm: Pawsome Social. Sustainability Planner & Animal Control Officers at the Bowie Dog Park throwing a “pawsome” party for pups and owners (attachment 3).
- April 2, 9-noon: Annual Stream Cleanup at multiple locations across the city. ***Service hours available*** (attachment 4).
- May 7, time TBD: Pawsome Social #2 at Bowie Dog Park.
- May 21, 10-2: Annual Bowie-Crofton Garden Club Plant Sale at the Belair Mansion. This is part of the larger Heritage Weekend taking place at the mansion.

2. Bowie, Mitchellville and Vicinity Area Master Plan Approved

On Tuesday, the Prince George’s County Council, sitting as the District Council, approved a new master plan for Bowie, Mitchellville and Vicinity. At the Committee of the Whole session that preceded the final vote, Council Member Todd Turner proposed Amendment Number One, which modified the content of CR-18-2022 and restored the County Planning Board’s recommendations regarding the boundary of the Bowie Local Center. The Committee passed the amended resolution and shortly thereafter, the District Council voted 7-0-1 (Burroughs abstained; Dernoga, Ivey and Glaros were absent) to approve Draft 2 of CR-18-2022. The motions to approve were made by Council Member

Todd Turner and seconded by Council Member Derrick Davis. This action concludes the updating of the Bowie Master Plan. Later this year, the District Council is expected to initiate a Sectional Map Amendment to revise the zoning in the Bowie area to reflect the new Master Plan's land use policies.

3. Economic Development Committee (EDC)

The Bowie EDC held their regular meeting on Wednesday and heard a presentation from Mr. Conor Crimmins, a member of the Kensington Town Council, on the successful effort to revive their old and historic downtown. His slides and a background article are attached. The recording of Mr. Crimmins presentation is on You Tube here: <https://youtu.be/ojCCxXhHqVY>. Kensington's Mayor, Tracey Furman, also spoke. Councilmember Gardner, Council's liaison to the Committee, thanked the guest speakers on behalf of the City of Bowie. The EDC will schedule an additional meeting about Old Town Bowie in the near future.

Weed Warrior Workday

March 19, April 2, April 23

9am- noon

Earn SSL hours



The English Ivy on these trees is brown & that's good!

English ivy is an invasive: It steals nutrients and can strangle a tree's trunk. It can grow to the top of the tree and weigh it down, making it vulnerable to death or damage during storms.

The City's Green Team holds Weed Warrior Workdays 6x per year to help remove the ivy.

Please join our efforts! email armentrout@cityofbowie.org to register *earn SSL hours*

www.cityofbowie.org/WeedWarriors

Contact

adiaz@cityofbowie.org

to register



Coffee & Climate #2

A conversation about stormwater, trees, our watershed, and much more!

Featuring the Sustainability Planner and the Watershed Manager

- Tuesday, March 22 at 10 am via zoom
- Please register via the event calendar at cityofbowie.org
- Email adiaz@cityofbowie.org with questions! We will answer all questions submitted





City of Bowie presents:

A PAWSOME SOCIAL!

Join us at the Bowie Dog Park on March 23 from 4-6 pm for a **Pawsome** good time! Learn about pet licensing, rabies clinics, pet waste & more.





The City of Bowie invites you to:

The Annual Stream Cleanup

April 2, 2022 9AM-Noon. Locations vary.

Email Twright@cityofbowie.org to register.

SSL hour opportunity





TOWN OF

KENSINGTON

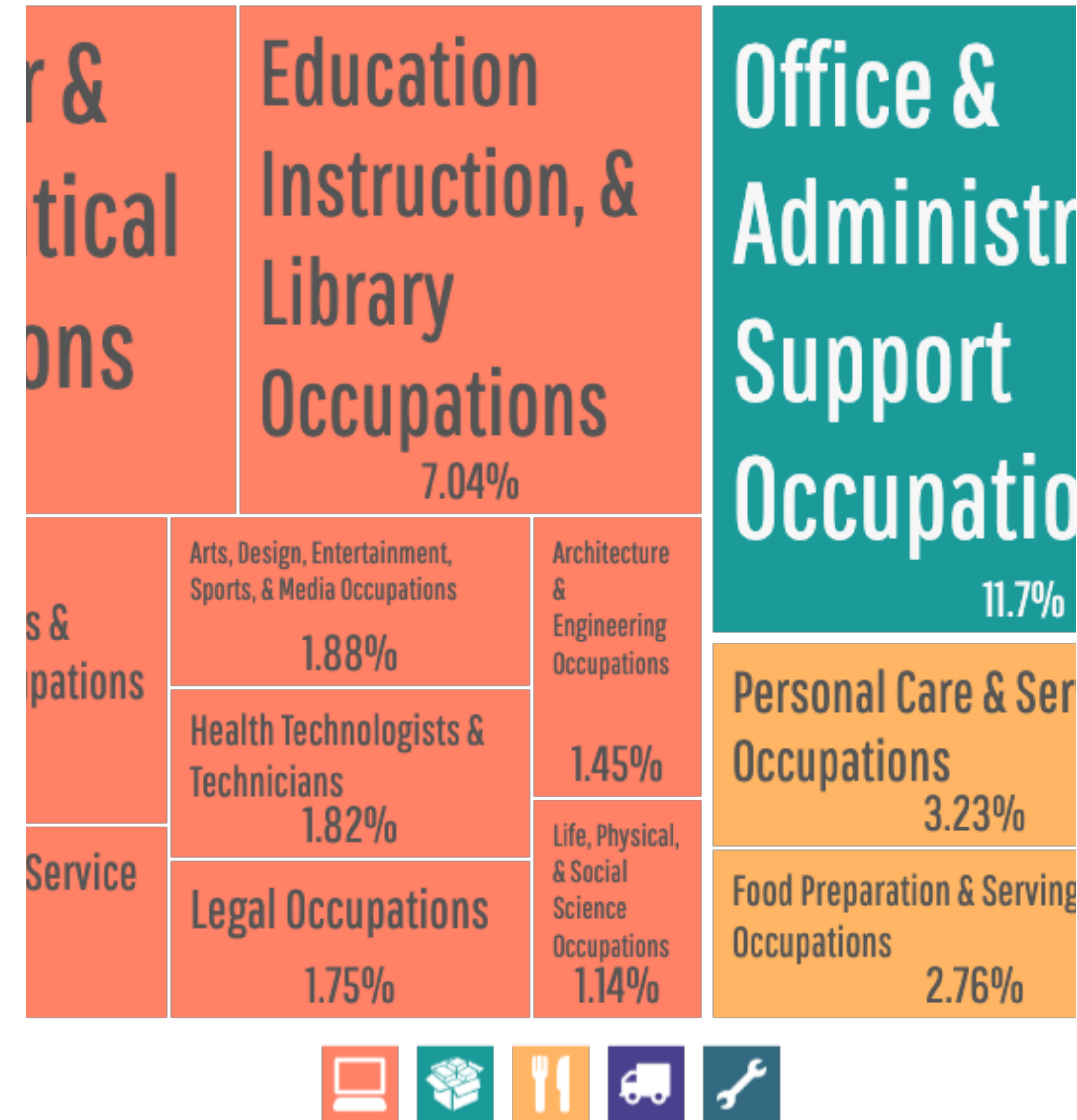
OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

Total: 32k

BOWIE & KENSINGTON

HOW WE COMPARE WITH ONE ANOTHER

	Bowie	Kensington
Population	58,541	2,098
No. of Households	21K	798
Land Size	20.55 sq mi	0.51 sq mi
Median Age	42.7	43.2
Median Income	\$113,338	\$125,357
Home Ownership	82.6%	60.8%
Median Property Value	\$338,100	\$712,500

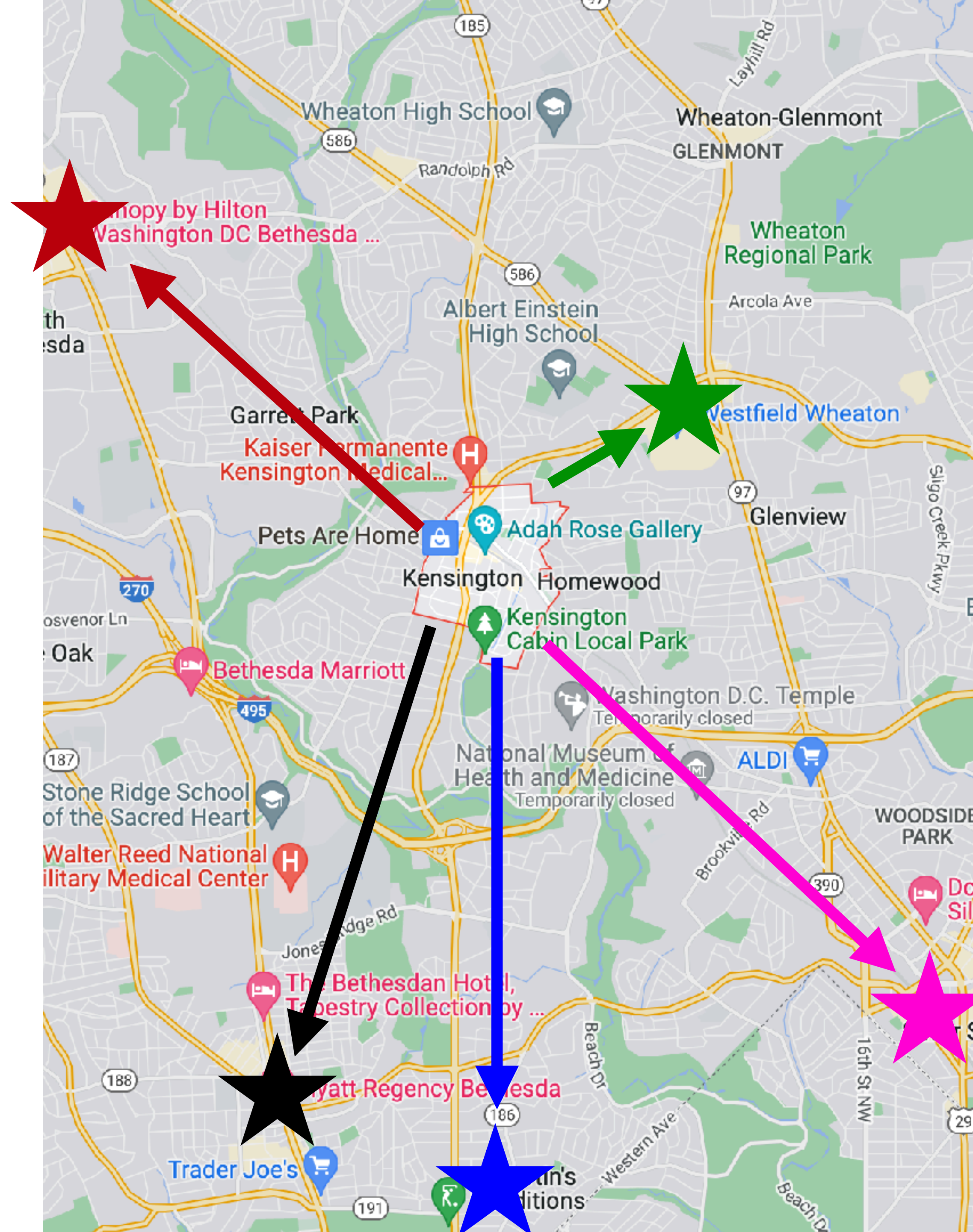


2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019

KENSINGTON, MD

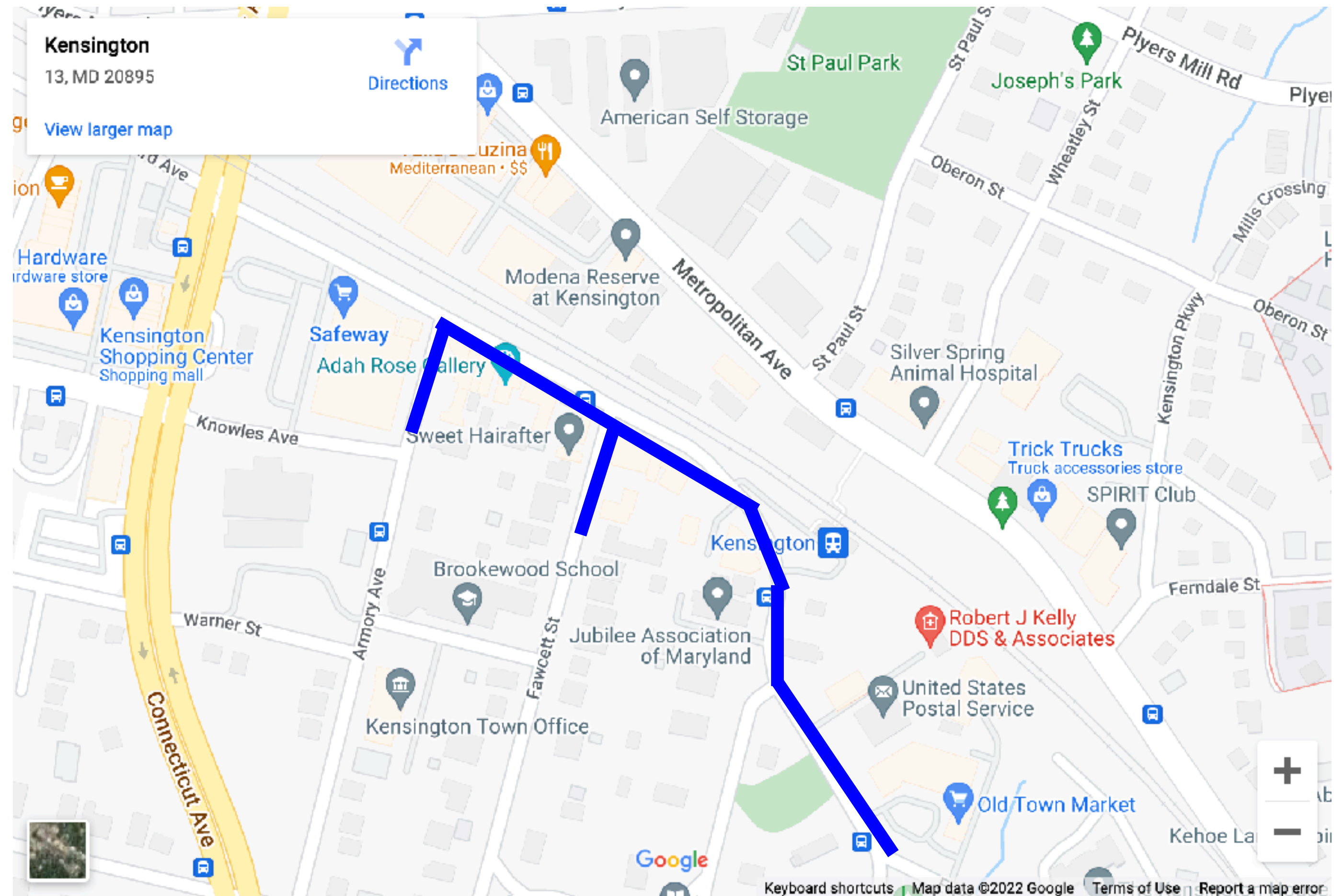
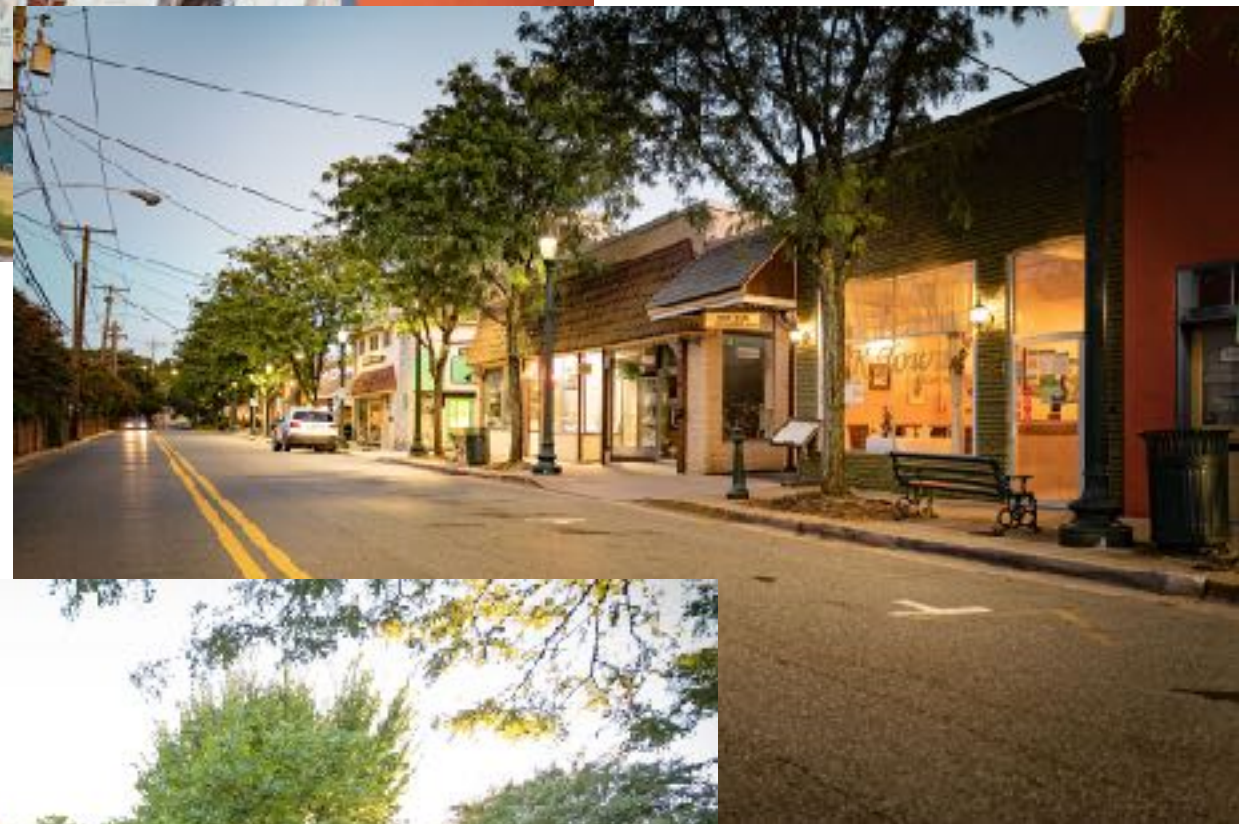
OUR PLACE IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

-  **Pike & Rose District, 3.3 miles**
-  **Wheaton, 1.4 miles**
-  **Downtown Silver Spring, 3.8 miles**
-  **Chevy Chase/NW Washington DC, 5.4 miles**
-  **Bethesda, 4.2 miles**



MAP OF KENSINGTON HISTORIC BUSINESS DISTRICT

HISTORIC BUSINESS DISTRICT



KENSINGTON, THEN & NOW

TWO DECADES OF PROGRESS: 2002 TO 2022

2002 Business Makeup

- No Alcohol Licenses
- Continental Pizza (take out)
- China Gourmet (in/out)
- Manny's Subs (take out)



2022 Business Makeup

- Multiple alcohol license types available: on-sale, off-sale, brewery, special event, tastings, salons
- Frankly...Pizza (in/out, Bethesda Magazine #1 or #2 rated)*
- K'Town Bistro (top rated French)*
- Old Town Market (sandwiches)*
- Dish & Dram (local favorite)*
- Knowles Station Wine & Co. *
- Potomac Sweets Bakery
- deliClub*
- Five Guys
- Chipotle
- Starbucks
- Crisp & Juicy
- Hibachi Express
- Java Nation*
- Buns & Rice
- Talia's Cuzina
- Gelatteria*
- Playa Bowls

STATEWIDE PROGRAMS

MARYLAND GRANT AND REVITALIZATION PROGRAMS

Main Street Maryland Program

Main Street Maryland is a comprehensive downtown revitalization program created in 1998 by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

The program strives to strengthen the economic potential of Maryland's traditional main streets and neighborhoods. Designated Main Street Maryland communities have made a commitment to improve the economy, appearance and image of their traditional downtown business districts.

<https://dhcd.maryland.gov/communities/pages/programs/mainstreet.aspx>

<https://mainstreetmaryland.org/>

Program Open Space-Local

Program Open Space – Local provides financial and technical assistance to local subdivisions for the planning, acquisition, and/or development of recreation land or open space areas.

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/land/pages/programopenspace/home.aspx>



REGULATIONS & POLITICAL OUTREACH

LEGISLATIVE & PLANNING CHANGES FOR ECON DEV

- **2007: Formerly “Dry” Town; Changed Maryland State Liquor Control laws to allow alcohol for on- and off sale within Kensington**
 - **Subsequent changes needed in 2019, 2020, and 2022 as Business District grew**
- **2012: Passed New Kensington Sector Plan for Redevelopment**
 - **Creation of Development Review Board (DRB) committee to implement Sector Plan**
- **Get to know your elected officials (State, County, Local) & Planning Staff**



CREATING A P.L.A.C.E.

WHAT IS YOUR TOWN'S IDENTITY AND BRAND

Play (Fitness, Recreation, Parks)

Live (Housing)

Arts (Public Art, Galleries, Artisans)

Commerce (Shops, Services, Markets)

Entertainment (Live Music, Theatre, Events)

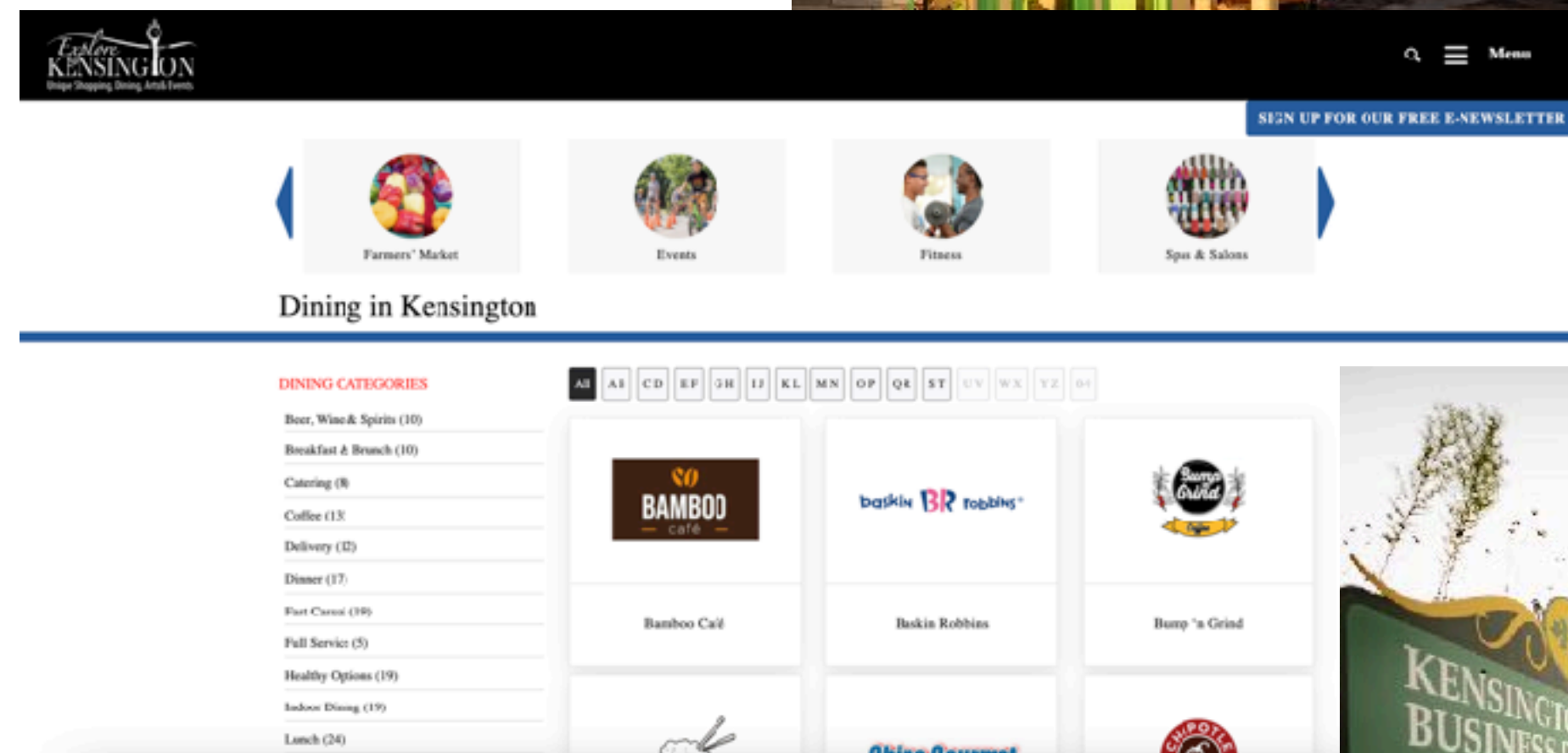




ANTIQUE ROW @ KENSINGTON HISTORIC BUSINESS DISTRICT

BRANDING AND MARKETING TO CREATE A SENSE OF PLACE

- Website, Social Media
- Wayfinding Signage
- Marketing, Mailers, Directory
- Parking
- Events
- Awards (Bethesda Magazine Awarded: Best for Pizza, Place for Wine, Farmers Market, Outdoor Music Venue)



ACTIVATE THE SPACE

CREATING REASONS TO VISIT, SHOP, DINE, AND RETURN

- Kensington Farmers' Market & Summer Concert Series
- Kensington Day of the Book Festival
- Kensington Car Show
- Craft and Art Festivals
- Kensington Labor Day Parade & Festival and Paint the Town Art Contest
- Food Truck Nights
- Kensington 8K
- Holidays: Town Christmas Tree and Menorah Lightings, Holiday Open House, Caroling Around the Fountain, Light Up K'Town Festival
- Kensington Dog Parade
- 2022 Kensington Oktoberfest??



RECRUIT NEW BUSINESSES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS EVERYONE'S JOB

- Perform a Gap/Needs Analysis
 - What businesses are missing or needed, what bring foot traffic, what compliment what is there
- Get to know the building owners, business owners, and developers (yes, those guys)
- Talk to EVERYONE
- Be a brand ambassador for your space - know how to talk about your business district
- Be approachable, accommodating, and don't be selfish



COME VISIT US

UPCOMING EVENTS IN KENSINGTON

Farmers' Market, every Saturday 9am - 1pm

Kensington Food Truck Nights, May - Oct

KHS Summer Concerts, Jun - Sep

Labor Day Parade & Festival, Sep 5

Paint the Town Art Show, Sep 3-5

Kensington Model Train Show, Sep 10-11

Opera in the Park, Oct 2022

Kensington Oktoberfest, Sep/Oct 2022

[HTTPS://TOK.MD.GOV/FEATURED-EVENTS/](https://tok.md.gov/featured-events/)



Kensington: A town at a crossroads

Historic community dusts itself off and polishes its treasures to attract a new future

By Tammy Murphy

“Renewal” is the word Mayor Peter Fosselman chooses to describe the effort underway in Kensington, a small town situated at a commuter crossroads in burgeoning Montgomery County. Like many small municipalities across Maryland, the town changed little during the past 25 years as development around it boomed.

Rectifying that situation and updating Kensington’s appearance, entertainment offerings and business base without diminishing its turn-of-the century charm is a work in progress. For the past three-and-a-half years, the town council and Mayor Fosselman have been working to help Kensington redefine itself as a more progressive and attractive destination. With a small

Kensington’s heritage dates back to the opening of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Its historic architecture is attributed to Washington, D.C. developer Brainard Warner who, after becoming enamored with the Kensington district during a visit to London, decided to recreate its charm in a planned community back home. The town was incorporated in 1894.

Today, the one-half-square-mile town has a population nearing 1,900. Located about five miles north of the nation’s capital, it is at the center of the greater Kensington area, with 18,000 more residents. The Urban Land Institute report calls the town “a charming, peaceful, turn-of-the-century Victorian community with ... some of the most beautiful wooded streets and historic homes in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.”

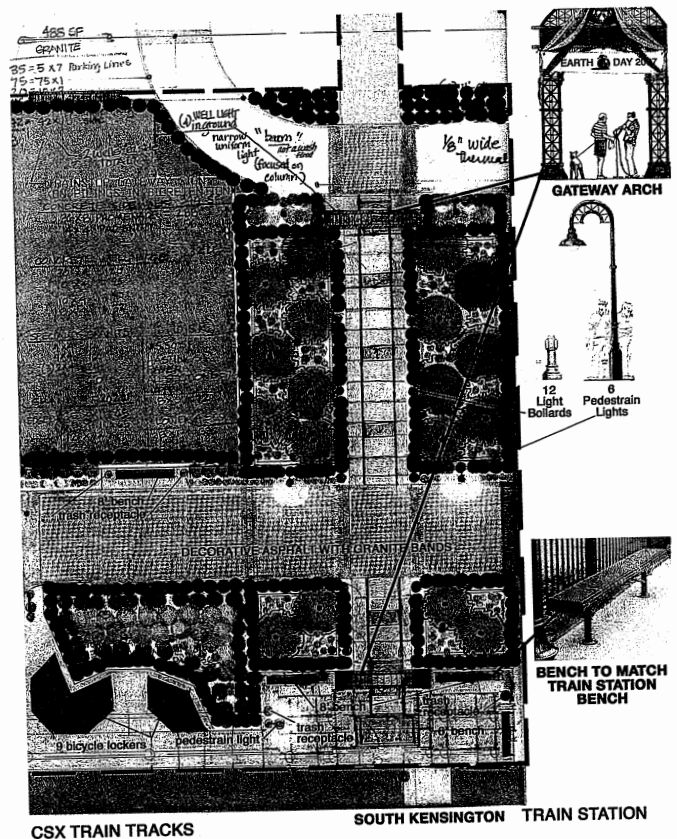
The change is drawing people to town. “You can tell just by the size of the crowds each week,” Mayor Fosselman said.

budget and big determination, they’re looking to shepherd into place a wave of upgrades, new initiatives and an updated sector plan that will result in revitalization.

The effort is about “breathing some new life into the town,” Mayor Fosselman said.

A public relations firm was hired to create a marketing plan, and the Urban Land Institute was commissioned to outline a durable future for an outdated Kensington. The county was lobbied for an update of the area’s 36-year-old sector plan, opening the door for new projects that will be more reflective of modern use and building trends.

The result is a marketing strategy from Maier and Warner Public Relations that aims to better identify and improve Kensington’s key attributes, creating a brand identity and attracting more visitors, shoppers and new businesses. A print advertising campaign is under way to promote town treasures, including thriving arts and theater communities, unique shops and a weekly farmers’ market. A November 2008 Urban Land Institute report targeted several sites for redevelopment, and a nearly complete master plan update that introduces Montgomery County’s new CR zone (Commercial Residential) will allow developers more use and density-flexibility than traditional mixed-use zones—of which Kensington has had none.



CSX TRAIN TRACKS SOUTH KENSINGTON TRAIN STATION
PEDESTRIAN PARK COMPONENT
THE KENSINGTON GATEWAY PARK

Plans to transform a concrete plant foundation next to the MARC station into a downtown park are among Kensington’s revitalization efforts.

But it also notes that “with its primary shopping attractions and Victorian neighborhood charm hidden by aging storefronts and gas stations, the town has become less of a destination and more of a pass-through community, hindering opportunities for commercial revenue.” A short portion of Connecticut Avenue, a major commuter artery carrying up to 55,000 vehicles a day, bisects the community and is referred to by some as “Gasoline Alley” for its number of service stations.

It’s a moniker that Kensington officials want to vanquish, along with some dilapidated lots and unsightly warehouses, in favor of redeveloped projects with new boutiques and restaurants and renewed and expanded town mainstays, like its renowned Antique Row, the Farmers’ Market and West Howard shops offering fine furnishings.

demonstrate to potential investors that Kensington is welcoming to new projects.

Kensington’s outlook “is not the stodgy old mentality it used to be,” he said. “It’s progressive, forward thinking, open-minded and extremely inclusive ... wanting everyone to participate, including people from outside” the town.

Supporters are quick to point out the work that has already been done to change the perception of Kensington, mainly as only an antiques venue or a convenient gas stop. Promotion of venues and activities that already exist is underway. For example, the Saturday Farmers’ Market used to be April through November. The market now operates year-round, featuring meats, seafood, breads and specialty items in the off-season.

The change is drawing people to town. “You can tell just by the size of the crowds each week,” Mayor Fosselman said.

A new Web site, www.ExploreKensington.com, has been launched to keep visitors informed of other ongoing attractions such as the activities of the Kensington Players and the historic Noyes Library for Young People. There are also a number of annual events like a September 8K race and the Paint the Town Art Show.

Town ordinances have been changed or adopted in support of streetscape beautification, including one that limits the size and duration of signage. Neon or backlit signs are also prohibited.

The town has also won some legislative victories. In 2008 a state law prohibiting liquor service in the downtown area was reversed, opening the door for more restaurants, and legislation was passed to give the town quasi-zoning authority, assuring more local oversight of development.

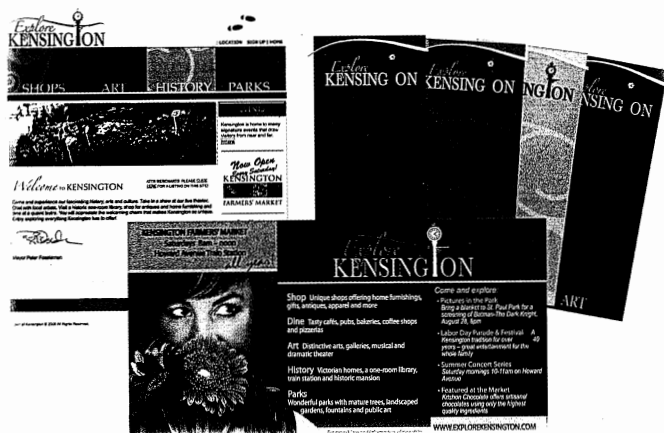
Last fall preservationists successfully lobbied to save Kensington’s historic centerpiece: the Warner Circle Mansion and its 4.5 acre garden, which will become offices for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The building will offer public conference rooms and the grounds will be maintained as a public park.

Kensington is a small town, but town believers think its offerings and potential can make it a rival for neighboring locations like Bethesda, Rockville and Silver Spring that currently attract larger numbers of shoppers, diners and event goers.

Mayor Fosselman said becoming a destination location will be a boon to town residents as the town’s tax base is increased, allowing the town government to provide better services. “That’s the goal in this,” he added.

It is a small town journey that, for now, can be measured in parts. “We’re definitely meeting all of our goals,” Mayor Fosselman said. The hope, he added, is that after the town has demonstrated a willingness to invest in itself and its future, there will be businesses that will, too. ■

Tammy Murphy is a freelance writer who works with the Maier and Warner Public Relations firm in Rockville.



Kensington’s marketing materials sport a new look.

“We don’t want big-box uses,” said Mayor Fosselman. “We’re looking for charming boutiques, small retail shops, restaurants and galleries. We’re looking for uses to compliment the antique shops we have.”

Supporters of the revitalization know that they need to prime the pump to catch the interest of new business, sprucing up the town’s appearance and laying the groundwork for new projects. It is a long process of which Mayor Fosselman said the town is in the middle; the beginning focused on convincing town leadership and longtime residents that the renewal was needed. Already a new Safeway store has opened and the town’s oldest shopping center just got an attractive facelift.

“There was some animosity,” he said, but with persistent outreach and openness, a consensus among town residents and neighboring communities was reached.

The early stage also involved working on the update of Kensington’s 1978 Sector Plan, the oldest in Montgomery County. It was a “hard process and it’s almost over,” Mayor Fosselman stated. The county Planning Board approved the update in November and the County Council reviewed the plan in February. Mayor Fosselman hopes the revised plan will